

AMENDMENT OF THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 128, 136 and 142 as follows:

Claims 1-127 (canceled)

Claim 128 (currently amended): A wireless automatically-activated code symbol reading system for use in a work environment, said wireless automatically-activated code symbol reading system comprising:

(A) a wireless hand-supportable code symbol reader in two-way RF communication with a base station operably connected to a host system, by way of an RF-based wireless data communication link having a predetermined RF communication range over which two-way communication of data packets can occur in a reliable manner, said wireless hand-supportable code symbol reader including

(1) a hand-supportable housing;

(2) a code symbol reading mechanism, disposed in said hand-supportable housing, for automatically reading a code symbol on an object within a first predetermined time period, and each instant said code symbol is read within said first predetermined time period, automatically producing a symbol character data string representative of said read code symbol;

(3) a first RF-based transceiver circuit, disposed in said hand-supportable housing, for transmitting to said base station groups of data packets associated with one or more of said produced symbol character data strings;

(4) a data packet group buffer, disposed in said hand-supportable housing, for buffering one or more groups of data packets associated with symbol character data strings produced in response to the reading of code symbols by said code symbol reading mechanism;

(5) a data transmission circuit, disposed in said hand-supportable housing, for transmitting a selected one of said produced symbol character data strings to either said first RF transceiver circuit or said data packet group buffer;

(6) a manually-operated data transmission activation switch, integrated with said hand-supportable housing, for generating a data transmission control activation signal in response to the activation of said manually-operated data transmission activation switch within said first predetermined time period; and

(7) a device controller, disposed within said hand-supportable housing, for controlling the operation of said wireless hand-supportable code symbol reader and said first RF-based transceiver circuit; and

(B) said base station installable within a work environment and including

(1) a base station housing,

(2) a second RF-based transceiver circuit, disposed within said base station housing, for receiving groups of data packets corresponding to the symbol character data strings transmitted from said first RF-based transceiver circuit, and

(3) a base station controller mounted in said base station housing, for controlling the operation of said base station;

wherein said first and second RF-based transceiver circuits enable a RF-based wireless data communication link between said wireless hand-supportable code symbol reader and said base station;

wherein said first and second RF-based transceiver circuits cooperate to enable the communication of data packets between said wireless hand-supportable code symbol reader and said base station, over said RF-based wireless data communication link;

wherein said second RF-based transceiver includes means for automatically generating and transmitting a reference signal to said first RF-based transceiver circuit over said RF-based wireless data communication link, wherein said reference signal has a strength that varies with distance traveled by said reference signal;

wherein said first RF-based transceiver circuit includes means for automatically receiving said reference signal and detecting the strength of said reference signal; and

wherein said device controller is programmed to automatically detect when said wireless hand-supportable code symbol reader is located inside of said predetermined RF communication range based on measuring the strength of said detected reference signal, and thereupon to automatically transmit to said first RF-based transceiver, the symbol character data string produced at substantially the same time when said data transmission control activation signal is generated while said wireless hand-supportable code symbol reader is located inside of said predetermined RF communication range.

Claim 129 (previously presented): The wireless automatically-activated code symbol reading system of claim 128, wherein said device controller is further programmed to automatically detect when said wireless hand-supportable code symbol reader is located outside of said predetermined RF communication range based on measuring the strength of said detected reference signal, and thereupon to automatically collect and store in said data packet group buffer, the symbol character data string produced at substantially the same time when said data transmission control activation signal is generated while said wireless hand-supportable code symbol reader is located outside of said predetermined RF communication range.

Claim 130 (previously presented): The wireless automatically-activated code symbol reading system of claim 129, wherein said wireless hand-supportable code symbol reader further comprises an out-of-communication range indicator, integrated with said hand-supportable housing, for generating an audible and/or visual signal indicative that said wireless hand-supportable code symbol reader is located outside said predetermined RF communication range; and

wherein said device controller controls said data transmission circuit, said data packet group buffer and said out-of-communication range indicator.

Claim 131 (previously presented): The wireless automatically-activated code symbol reading system of claim 130, wherein said device controller is further programmed to cause said out-of-communication range indicator to automatically generate audible and/or visual signal when said wireless hand-supportable code symbol reader is detected as being located outside of said predetermined RF communication range based on measuring the strength of said detected reference signal.

Claim 132 (previously presented): The wireless automatically-activated code symbol reading system of claim 129, wherein said base station further comprises: a cradle portion adapted for receiving said hand-supportable housing.

Claim 133 (previously presented): The wireless automatically-activated code symbol reading system of claim 132, wherein said cradle portion includes a radio antenna.

Claim 134 (previously presented): The wireless automatically-activated code symbol reading system of claim 131, wherein said data packet group buffer is realized as a memory chip installed aboard said hand-supportable housing.

Claim 135 (previously presented): The wireless automatically-activated code symbol reading system of claim 129, wherein said reference signal is a heartbeat-type signal generated from said second RF-based transceiver circuit.

Claim 136 (currently amended): The wireless automatically-activated code symbol reading system of claim 129, wherein said first RF-based transceiver circuit and said device controller are realized as a first RF-based chipset disposed within said hand-supportable housing.

Claim 137 (previously presented): The wireless automatically-activated code symbol reading system of claim 129, wherein said second RF-based transceiver circuit and said base station controller are realized as second RF-based chipset disposed within said base station housing.

Claim 138 (previously presented): The wireless automatically-activated code symbol reading system of claim 129, which further comprises a good read indicator, integrated with said hand-supportable housing, for indicating each instance of when a code symbol is read by said code symbol reading mechanism and a symbol character data string representative thereof is produced.

Claim 139 (previously presented): The wireless automatically-activated code symbol reading system of claim 129, which further comprises an object detection subsystem disposed within said hand-supportable housing and including infrared (IR) signal transmission/receiving circuitry for automatically detecting said object within an object detection field definable relative to said hand-supportable housing.

Claim 140 (previously presented): The wireless automatically-activated code symbol reading system of claim 129, which further comprises an object detection subsystem disposed within said hand-supportable housing, and including low-power non-visible laser beam signaling mechanism for automatically detecting said object within an object detection field definable relative to said hand-supportable housing.

Claim 141 (previously presented): The wireless automatically-activated code symbol reading system of claim 129, wherein said device controller is further programmed so that said device controller automatically tests said RF-based wireless data communication link prior to transmitting symbol character data, stored in said data packet group buffer, to said first RF-based transceiver circuit when said data transmission control activation signal is generated while said wireless hand-supportable code symbol reader is once again located inside of said predetermined RF communication range.

Claim 142 (currently amended): The wireless automatically-activated code symbol reading system of claim 131, wherein said wireless code symbol reader further comprises three LEDs integrated with said hand-supportable housing, and wherein said device controller is programmed so that said three LEDs are illuminated to indicate that said wireless code symbol reader is located outside of said predetermined RF communication range ~~out-of-range~~.

Claim 143 (previously presented): The wireless automatically-activated code symbol reading system of claim 131, wherein said wireless hand-supportable code symbol reader further comprises three LEDs integrated with said hand-supportable housing, and wherein said device controller is programmed so that said three LEDs are illuminated to indicate that symbol character data is stored in said data packet group buffer waiting to be transmitted to said base station by way of said RF-based wireless data communication link.

Claim 144 (previously presented): The wireless automatically-activated code symbol reading system of claim 131, wherein said device controller is programmed so that symbol character data

stored within said data packet group buffer can be cleared by holding down said manually-operated data transmission activation switch for a second predetermined time duration.

Claim 145 (previously presented): The wireless automatically-activated code symbol reading system of claim 131, wherein said code symbol reading mechanism comprises a laser scanning code symbol reading mechanism capable of producing a visible laser scanning pattern for automatically reading a code symbol on an object within a first predetermined time period, and each instant said code symbol is read by said visible laser scanning pattern within said first predetermined time period, automatically producing a symbol character data string representative of said read code symbol.

Claim 146 (previously presented): The wireless automatically-activated code symbol reading system of claim 128, wherein said code symbol is a bar code symbol.

Claim 147 (previously presented): The wireless automatically-activated code symbol reading system of claim 146 wherein said bar code symbol is a 1D bar code symbol.

Claim 148 (previously presented): The wireless automatically-activated code symbol reading system of claim 146, wherein said bar code symbol is a 2D bar code symbol.